DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS.—(*Contd.*)

DEMAND XX—PUBLIC WORKS.—(*Contd.*)

PRESIDENT: We are now at the discussion of the supplementary grant under Demand XX moved by Mr. Natesa Aiyar.

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): Sir, I think it will perhaps facilitate the consideration of Mr. Natesa Aiyar's motion, if I explain the circumstances in which Chemistry is being taught in the College and the necessity which exists, under present conditions, for increased accommodation in the Department. At the same time, I can also deal with the needs of the future as far as they can be foreseen; and amongst the possibilities it will be well to look at the coming of a University for Travancore. When the old College was split into two and the old buildings adapted for science work, some of the adaptations made met the needs of the science departments very well and some changes are also being made now.

In view of the changes made or in the course of being made, the college authorities made increased admissions to all the various classes.

The Chemistry department, however, in spite of the fact that its numbers increased from 376 to 591, secured as increased accommodation only one additional room for the Chemistry Library.

The various rooms used for practical work by the students, each of which was originally set apart for the use of one set of students, Intermediate *or* B. A. *only*, are now all being used by both sets of students, and this interferes with the preparations that have to be made for all the classes. It is necessary that *separate* Intermediate and B. A. laboratories should be provided.

The arrangement of the teaching of Chemistry also requires the provision of an extra lecture room so that simultaneous lectures may be given in Chemistry as they are now being given in Physics.

The provision of the necessary accommodation has been carefully considered and Mr. Natesa Aiyar's motion is the result of that consideration. The cost and the details of the plans were given by Mr. Natesa Aiyar.

I have explained that increased accommodation is required for the students already attending the college; and it has to be remembered that the strength of the college will rise automatically next year due to increased promotions from the present very large junior classes to the senior classes.

Again, the question of still further increasing the strength of the junior classes in the college has been very carefully examined by the Principal and the College Council, and it is found that, with the existing accommodation the Physics and Natural Science departments can take a still larger number of students, but the accommodation in the Chemistry building stands in the way of increased admissions, as Physics, Chemistry and Natural Science are common subjects to a large number of students.

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[Mr. J. Stephenson.]

As far as the Physics and Natural Science Departments are concerned the strength of the various classes can be increased as follows:—

Junior Intermediate Class, Group I (Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry), 170 to 200 ; and

Junior Intermediate Class, Group II (Chemistry, Botany and Zoology), 108 to 138, making a total increase of 60 students in the Junior Intermediate Class.

This further increase of 60 students in the Junior Intermediate Class will lead automatically to an increase of about 50 in the Senior Intermediate Class. The extension of the chemistry laboratory would make these admissions possible and, without further accommodation, increased admissions cannot be made.

There is another way of looking at the matter which calls for most careful consideration. By the removal of the English Honors and the History Honors Classes from the old College, the College of Science has become a Pass College. It is very necessary that either now or in the future Honors courses should be instituted there. The Chemistry Department attracts by far the largest number of students to the college and the claims of Chemistry for Honors teaching are very strong indeed. Unless further accommodation is provided, these claims cannot be attended to.

There is also the question of original research. The Department now has a large staff consisting of a Professor, Assistant Professors and Tutors. The Professor has already done a good deal of original work. Some of the original work done by him has been done in the College and his contributions have been accepted by various chemical journals. I say that some of the work has been done in the college, but the continuance of that work is at present greatly handicapped by the crowds of students who now occupy the Chemistry building. It is most necessary and desirable that ample facilities should be provided for such work by him and by his assistants under his guidance.

What I have said so far applies to the present conditions and to the time during which the conditions will be similar to the conditions which now exist, that is, as long as this College is affiliated to the University of Madras. It is necessary, as Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai points out, that the matter should be also considered in relation to the possibility of a new University being established in Travancore or on the West Coast.

The Report of the University Committee is now before the Government and is being considered. Without in any way anticipating the decision which will be arrived at on that report, it is clear that the teaching of Chemistry to the Pass degree stage to the same number of students as at present or even to a larger number will have to be continued. Whether ultimately this teaching is to be done in Trivandrum or elsewhere, for the present and for the next few years it will have to be done in Trivandrum where alone there is any provision for teaching beyond the Intermediate stage. The erection of laboratories elsewhere

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would take time, and before erection could begin, many matters of policy, grouping and arrangement of teaching facilities would have to be settled.

Meanwhile the matter is urgent and increased accommodation will have to be provided. There remains the question whether the scheme proposed is the best, considering the present circumstances and eventualities. I may say that, amongst the schemes considered was one for a temporary building behind the existing chemical laboratory. This would have meant the demolition of existing tiffin sheds, bandy sheds and their erection elsewhere. Space for them would have been very difficult to find as the college compound is already over-crowded. The building too would have been much too near the road, low-lying and consequently ill-ventilated. The proposed extension being a two-storied building with the addition of cellar rooms, it will not take up much ground and it can be made to conform architecturally with the existing laboratory to which it will be added. The extra cost of this extension over that of the temporary building proposed will be comparatively little and quite justifiable in view of the advantages secured.

There is just one further consideration. In the event of the ordinary science teaching being removed from Trivandrum in connection with a new University scheme, is there any possibility of the extended laboratory serving any useful purpose within that scheme? It seems to me very likely that the building could be very advantageously used either for teaching in Medicine, Agriculture, Forestry or almost any other technical or scientific course. It could also be used for housing various other sections of the Medical, Industrial and other Departments which require laboratories. There is the bacteriological laboratory and there are also many other laboratories in other departments. If they were grouped in one central institution, there would be a very great saving in gas and water supply.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): Granting that the University is going to be an accomplished fact, can he give us some rough idea as to the number of years required for making it an accomplished fact?

PRESIDENT: That is not relevant to the subject in hand.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): Granting that the Government and the people are prepared to make it an accomplished fact—

PRESIDENT: If you grant it, you may also grant the time. (*Laughter.*)

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): In case the present demand is granted, how many more students will it be possible to admit in the Chemistry section in the B. A. class?

PRESIDENT: Mr. Stephenson said that, as regards the Junior Intermediate class, 60 more could be taken. There will be the consequential increase in the Senior Intermediate and B. A. classes.

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): What is very necessary is separate laboratories for the Intermediate and the B. A. classes. I do not know whether Mr. Natesa Aiyar's scheme provides any extra accommodation for the B. A. students.

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): There will be accommodation for 60 more in the new building.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Have the Government moved in the matter of acquiring some more land to be added to the premises of the Science College?

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): The question, I believe, is being considered.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): In that case, why not wait until the acquisition of land is made so that buildings may be put up in another place, say for example, in the adjoining Commandant's compound?

PRESIDENT: There is an existing laboratory and the proposal is to extend it.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): But it is so very near.

PRESIDENT: Then the new laboratory will be detached and isolated.

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): The usefulness of the two laboratories in that case would not be so great as an extension of the present laboratory would be.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Will not the compound be cramped if we erect more buildings in these premises?

PRESIDENT: The temporary building would have further reduced the small open space now available behind the college and it is to avoid further cramping that the temporary building has been abandoned.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): A wing is proposed to be added to the laboratory. My question is whether that wing also will not be cramped.

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): There will be a certain amount of cramping in that corner of the compound. The best way will be to take all the out-buildings on to new ground and to have an extension added to the permanent building that we have already.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): It has been said that researches have been made by the staff. May I know one or two instances in which discoveries have been made and the result proclaimed so that we may be able to see what kind of work is being done and how far science has been benefited by the researches made by the staff?

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MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): It is rather a very difficult question to answer off-hand. Dr. Moudgill has made investigations as regards some of the oils of Travancore like lemon grass oil, and these results have been published in reputable journals which do not publish results unless they consider them to be valuable.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): Will it not be possible to take in more students in the next academical year if the grant is made?

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): It will not.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): What is the earliest time when more students may be admitted?

MR. J. STEPHENSON (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): Mr. Natesa Aiyar himself says that the construction will take eighteen months for completion. We should be able to take in more students by July, 1926.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Sir, I have very great pleasure in supporting all the items of the grant asked for. I thought that it was one of those grants which should be passed in this House without the least controversy. After the lucid statement made by the Director of Public Instruction, I do not think that any special pleading is necessary to prove to this House the necessity for this grant. College accommodation has been the burning question of the day for the last few years. There has been a great deal of agitation. All sorts of devices were recommended and it must be said to the credit of the present administration that accommodation has been secured for a larger number of students by the bifurcation of the Arts College from the Science section of His Highness the Maha Raja's College. I think that about 50 per cent. more of students have been admitted after this bifurcation. I had an interview with the Principal of the Science College at the time of the bifurcation to know whether more students could be admitted and he told me that the college was full up and no more students could be admitted.

Now the present scheme is to extend the college. As was clearly explained by Mr. Stephenson, we have a big staff of Professors, etc. At the time of the budget discussion, I tried to show to this House that His Highness the Maha Raja's College was one of the best colleges as regards the professorial staff in the Science section. Mr. Stephenson just now told us that we would be able to accommodate a very large number of students—probably about 160 students—both in the Intermediate and the B. A. classes. That, even from a financial point of view, is a big gain. I believe about Rs. 82 is paid by each student. That brings in a net profit of over Rs. 11,000 to our treasury. Looking at it even from that point of view, I think that it is a sound proposition.

Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai put forward the objection about the future University. I think that the present scheme will fit in with the

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[Mr. A. Govinda Menon.]

scheme of the University. It will not stand in the way. That is a joy yet to come—the University. I do not think that we need speak of it just now. It will take a few years, probably, before the big colleges are fit to be occupied. Meanwhile this big problem of college accommodation will grow in volume. The agitation has been growing in volume year after year and are we to stand still and look on till the University comes to solve that problem? For all these reasons, I have very great pleasure in supporting the grant.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I also wish to support the grant.

THE REV. FR. KURIAKOSE VETTIKKAPALLI (*Todupuzha* cum *Kunnatnad*): I have also great pleasure in supporting the motion. But I wish to say a few words about the first item of the demand, that is Rs. 1,000 for improving inland navigation and investigating the improvement of river communications. It is certainly a much-needed item. Much traffic is being carried on in North Travancore and the water routes are much cheaper than other routes and we all know that many of our rivers, at least many parts of the navigable rivers and many small canals, have been silted up and they have been neglected. I think it is high time that Government did something in the matter. But from the reply elicited from the Chief Engineer yesterday, I understand that he intends to restrict the investigation to the Muvattupuzha and the Pampa rivers.

PRESIDENT: They will be the rivers to be taken up *first*. That was what he said.

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): I simply mentioned the recommendation of the Economic Development Board.

THE REV. FR. KURIAKOSE VETTIKKAPALLI (*Todupuzha* cum *Kunnatnad*): I wish to bring to your kind notice that the Periyar river also requires investigation especially after the recent flood. Many parts of the river have been silted up and even in this month of January or Makaram navigation has become very difficult. So what I wish to bring to the notice of the Chief Engineer is that the Periyar also requires his immediate attention. With that, I beg to support the motion.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): I beg to join the Rev. Fr. Vettikkapalli in asking that the Periyar also should be taken up first.

PRESIDENT: It is for that that funds are required. All the important rivers are proposed to be investigated.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): After the floods, many rivers are silted up and even in the Alwaye river we do not find even three feet of water just in front of the palace. That has not been the case at any time in the past.

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PRESIDENT: Is it your point that the Periyar should *first* be investigated before any other river?

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): I do not say that. I only say that it should also be taken up first along with the other rivers.

PRESIDENT: There can only be one first. It is the object of the motion to investigate all the important rivers.

The first item of the demand for supplementary grant was put to the vote and sanctioned.

PRESIDENT: The next item relates to the extension of the chemistry laboratory in the Science College. In regard to that there was some slight difference of opinion.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I withdraw my objection.

The second item of the grant was also sanctioned.

The third item of the demand was sanctioned and the whole grant of Rs. 26,000 was made.

DEMAND XXI—ANCHAL.

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Sir, I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 300 for the re-introduction of motor service for the transport of Anchal mail between Kottayam and Parur.

As the House knows, the Anchal mail between Kottayam and Parur is now run temporarily by a batch of extra runners. Some time ago, in Dhanu 1096, Government established an anchal motor service between Kottayam and Parur and it was running for about 11 months, *i. e.*, until Vrischikam, 1097, when that service had to be discontinued on account of the unsatisfactory manner in which it was being run and also because certain portions of the road between Kottayam and Parur were not in order. Since then this temporary runners' service has been introduced and year after year the Government have been pointing out that, owing to the want of reliable contractors, it has not been possible to reintroduce the anchal motor service in that line. Even in the Administration Report of 1098 M. E. it was observed:

> "The runner service is kept up in the interior where cheap or regular motor transport is not available and between Kottayam and Parur in the main line owing to the difficulty in securing reliable motor service there."

When the Anchal Superintendent went on circuit to Muvattupuzha and other places recently, the people there bitterly complained of the delay and other difficulties to which they were being put on account of the absence of an anchal motor service. The members of the Rama Varma Club, Muvattupuzha, went to him on deputation and specifically pointed out this difficulty. He made enquiries, and as a result a contractor has now gone up to him with a request that he may be allowed to run the motor service between Kottayam and Parur. Since it is necessary for him to invest a certain amount of money at the beginning, the contract has to be given to the applicant for a period of time—

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